

103–382), which amended title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (Public Law No. 89–10).

Remarks on the Patients' Bill of Rights

August 1, 2001

The President. Today I'm very pleased to announce that Congressman Norwood and I have reached an agreement on how to get a Patients' Bill of Rights out of the House of Representatives.

Charlie started on this issue 6 years ago. He's worked diligently to protect Americans, patients, from wrongdoings. I appreciate so very much his spirit, because I share the same concerns. And now after long hard labors, we've reached an agreement on how to amend his bill, that will meet the principles that I outlined.

When I first came to Washington, I gave—right after I came to Washington, I gave a speech that talked about the principles necessary for a Patients' Bill of Rights. In that speech, I wanted a bill—a bill that was good for patients, a bill that allowed for people to be able to air their grievances, a bill that did not encourage frivolous lawsuits.

Charlie also shares the deep concern—I'll let him express his own concerns—but there's no question that he, himself, wanted to get a bill. He was practicing the art of what is possible. It's a spirit we need more of in Washington: people who come to this city with the intent of doing what's right, the intent of having accomplishment, the intent of not playing—you know, bickering over politics and getting intransigence because you don't get everything you want.

And so after a lot of labor and a lot of hard work and a lot of discussion, we shook hands in the Oval Office, about 10 minutes ago. And Charlie is going to head up to the Hill. I've spoken to the Speaker. And he's going to take—we're going to work on the language of the agreed upon amendment. And it'll give the Members something positive to vote for.

I want to thank Charlie Norwood for his hard work, for his—the southern gentlemen that he is—for his willingness to work with

the White House. It's a good signal for a lot of folks in Capitol Hill.

Now, Mr. Norwood.

[At this point, Representative Charlie Norwood briefly discussed the agreement, saying it would protect patients by ensuring that people could choose their own doctor, that a patient who was harmed would have recourse in some type of court setting, and that there would be good, independent, external review.]

The President. Get to work up there on the Hill, Charlie. Thank you very much. I appreciate—*[inaudible]*

Thank you, all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:40 p.m. in the James S. Brady Briefing Room at the White House.

Statement on Northern Ireland

August 1, 2001

This morning I telephoned Prime Ministers Blair and Ahern to state my strong support for the package of proposals their governments released today to the political party leaders in Northern Ireland.

I believe the package is fair and that it charts the way forward in areas central to the Good Friday agreement. The package allows the people of Northern Ireland to sustain devolved government and establish a police service with broad public support. It provides further steps for normalizing the security presence in Northern Ireland and assuring the stability and integrity of the Good Friday agreement's political institutions. The proposals also recognize that a commitment to democratic governance and normalized security requires all parties to renounce violence and deal decisively with paramilitary weapons. Consequently, substantial progress on decommissioning is an essential part of today's package.

In my conversation this morning, I commended the Prime Ministers for their continuing leadership on behalf of peace. I reiterated to them that the United States stands ready to help in any way that the governments and the parties find useful. I now urge all parties in Northern Ireland to reflect